

A

# LETTER

TO

Dr. BURNET,

Occasioned by his late LETTER

to Mr. LOWTH.

SIR,

When I read your Letter to Mr. Lowth, which you lately sent abroad to find him out (as you are pleased to express your self, as if Mr. Lowth were some Out-law'd, or Silence'd, or (at least) very Obscure Person) I could not but conclude either that Mr. Lowth was a most weak man for charging you with Fraudulent Dealing without turning to your Book, or that Dr. Burnet was a most confident man for denying matter of Fact in a Point that was so easy to be examined; especial-

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ly since you are so *positive* in justifying your *Self*, and so severe in dealing with *Him*, as if he were one of the most *Unjust*, and *Ignorant*, and *Contemptible* men of all the Clergy. Upon this I resolved to use mine *Own* eyes, because you say the Truth on your side is so *obvious* and *clear*; partly that I might find out Mr. *Lowth*'s mistake (if there was one) and partly that I might vindicate the Credit of your Book, which (you say) would be *shaken*, if he had accused you *justly*: for to be free with you, some people believe it to be the *only good* thing you ever wrote, that could recommend you to the kind opinion of Honest Men, that know the difference between *English* and *Scotch*.

I perceive the thing in Controversie between Mr. *Lowth* and your self lieth thus. First, Mr. *Lowth* tells us from Dr. *Durel*, that Arch-Bishop *Cranmer* changed his *former* opinion about *Church-Power*, subscribing to the Opinion of Dr. *Leyghton*; and that when Dr. *Durel* perused Dr. *Stillingfleet*'s Manuscript, he saw *Th. Cantuariensis* set with the Arch-Bishops own hand below Dr. *Leyghton*'s name, to shew his *Approbation* of *Leyghton's Judgment*, and his own love of *Truth*: and that this was upon the Article of *Church-Power* (for that's the *bottom* of the present Controversie.) Secondly, Mr. *Lowth* tells you upon his own observation, that you, Dr. *Burnet*, have dealt *unfaithfully* in Transcribing that part of the Manuscript,

script, in not giving any account to the World of the Arch Bishops subscription to Dr. Leyghton in *that* Point, but omitting it wholly, and even in the Second Edition of your Book, which you say is *Corrected* too. This is Mr. Lowth's story, and indeed if he be in the *right*, your dealing with the House of Commons, and with the Lords too, and with the whole world is very *Disingenuous* and *Foul*. On the other hand now, First, you Dr. Burnet, do grant in your *History* (lib. 3. pag. 289. as your Adversary doth rightly object) that in *Cranmer's Paper* some *Singular Opinions* of his about the nature of *Ecclesiastical Offices* are found; but as they are delivered by him with all possible *Modesty*, so they were not establish'd as the *Doctrin* of the *Church*, but laid *aside* as particular conceits of his *own*, and it seems that afterwards he changed his Opinion. Secondly, you confess in your *Letter*, that Dr. Durel, the Dean of *Windsor* may be *Believed* (pag. 5.) so that upon the whole you own what Mr. Lowth saith as to that part of the Story, that *Cranmer* did really subscribe to *Leighton* upon the Point of *Church-Power*, and that this Subscription is in the Manuscript which Dr. Durel and your self both saw. Now the question between Mr. Lowth and you is, about your *Faithfulness* or *Unfaithfulness* in the *Transcribing*. Mr. Lowth saith, you have *not* noted *Cranmer's Subscription* in that Point; you say that you

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have, and that in your Book (pag. 243. Vol. 1. Coll. Ret.) where Dr. Leyghton's Subscription is set down, there is set by it *T. Cantuarien*. Now if Mr. Lowth be in the wrong, he is guilty of extreme Carelessness indeed: but if you be in the wrong, you are guilty, Sir, of a double *Falshood*, of one in your *History*, of another in your *Letter*.

Now, Sir, (as you say) I would willingly believe the best of *every man* (and even of you Dr. Burnet) but since you have charged Mr. Lowth so severely for *Uncharitableness* and *Injustice*, and for *falsely* slandering you *falsly*, I must crave leave to tell you (for it is a hard thing, and needs a Preface to soften it) that you, your self, Dr. Burnet, are the *False man*, and the *Slanderer* (for all your *Confidence*) that have brought *Shame* upon your *self*, if you have not *forgotten* to blush, since (as some Folk says) you hardened your *Conscience* in the case of my Lord *Lauderdale*, and your *Forehead* at the *Rolls*. Be not angry, Sir, but turn to your own Book. Turn to *page 227.* where the *Question* of *Church-Power* is, where Leyghton's *Opinion* is, and where Cranmer's *Subscription* ought to be, and you cannot find any *Notice* of that *Subscription* there (tho' it be there in the *Manuscript*, saith Dr. Durel, whom you say we may *Believe*.) Turn on further to *page 230.* where another *question* upon the *same* *subject* is, and where Leyghton's *Opinion* is *again*, and where

where Cranmer's Subscription ought to be too (if we believe Dr. Durel, as you grant we may) and neither there is any the least notice taken of any such Subscription.

Indeed such a Subscription is noted by you page 243. (the place you refer us to in your Letter) there is *T. Cantuarien* over against the name of *Edward Leighton*; but that (good Doctor) is upon another Article, upon the Point of *Extreme Unction*, and upon that Point only, not upon the Point of *Church Power* (the Point in *Controversie between Mr. Lowth* and you.) And what is that Subscription to the purpose? He speaks of one thing; you of another that belongs not to the *Question*. He accuseth you for *False dealing* in the case of *Church-Power*; you would come off by shewing your *just dealing* in the case of *Unction*. This is a Trick, an Evasion, and instead of being a Defence, is an argument of *Guilt*, a confession of a crime which none but Dr. *Burnet* could have been guilty of. Mr. *Lowth* chargeth you upon one Point (that of *Church-Power*, I tell ye) and he chargeth you roundly, justly, clearly, like an *Honest man*, like an *English-man*, like a true-hearted *Clergy-man*; you answer him *Impertinently* upon a Point that neither of you is concerned about. You conceal Cranmer's Subscription, where you should have mention'd it (saith Mr. *Lowth*:) You tell him you have mention'd it:

it : but 'tis in *another* case that signifies nothing. What shall we call this ? Fraud ? Falseness ? Equivocation ? Shifting ? Impudence ? and an *Abuse* upon *Lowth* and *Crammer* too ? I call it *neither* ; but some in *England* call it a *Burnetisme* , meaning a complication of *all* this. Who but Dr. *Burnet* would tell Mr. *Lowth* now, that he hath taken his *Collection verbatim* from the *Original*, when there is not a word of the *Arch-Bishops Subscription* in the *Transcript*, where it is in the *Manuscript* ? Who but Dr. *Burnet* would have the Confidence to accuse Mr. *Lowth* of Uncharitableness in the manner, and of Injustice as to the matter of his charge ? Who but Dr. *Burnet* would presume to take occasion hence to upbraid Mr. *Lowth* for the roughness of his *Stile* (which proceeds most from the fault of his *Printer*, and for want of good *Correction* , the Honest man himself being at a great distance from *London* ?) Really Doctor, I am concerned for your *Reputation*, tho I hope it will not prejudice the credit of your *History*. If it shakes *that*, I think both Houses of the next Parliament will be concern'd to take you to *task* for it, and for *Imposing* thus upon all Englishmen, as if you took us all for Children and Fools, *eaſie* to be cheated. If it *should* hinder the sale of your *Book*, the Price of it will *fall* , and the Injury is to *Us* that bought it before, when the rate was *high*. But if it should turn to *your* injury , or the *Booksellers*,  
you

you know Chancery gives not Equity for an Unsaleable Book ; and of all men living I know none that has less reason to expect *Relief*, than your self, especially since the Master of the Rolls is *dead*. I only advise you to *own* your fault fairly and ingenuously, or else to take some other course to *clear* your self, lest the world say, that *you have plaid the Knav in your Book, and the Fool in your Defence.* And so farewell, till you pester the Pres again.

*Yours, &c.*

*I crave your pardon that I send you this by the Penny-Post ; your old Friends, Ferguson, Bethel, Billing, and I know not how many more that were wont to meet you at Starkey's by Temple-Bar, are now out of the way, and I know none other of your Intimates to send you a Letter by.*

F I N I S.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for Randal Taylor near Stationers-Hall, 1685.